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25 JUN 1986

Executive Registry

86- 2886

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: Ground Weapons Branch/Offensive Systems Division  
Office of Scientific and Weapons Research

SUBJECT: Image of CIA Employees (U)

1. Purpose: To alert you to some unfavorable criticism I recently received on the quality of CIA employees. (U)

2. Background: On 20 June 1986, I attended a conference on battlefield fire support technology and requirements. Attendees included various DoD representatives, Martin Marietta Corporation executive staff members, a Congressman (Representative Denny Smith, Republican of Oregon), several Congressional staff members, and some defense consultants. Lecturers/briefers included historians, writers, persons with fire support program experience, and persons with user experience. I gave a presentation on Fire Support for the Infantryman. At dinner and at conference breaks after my presentation--wherein I had been introduced as an Agency employee--several attendees expressed to me a general disappointment with the quality of CIA employees with whom they had recently come in contact. Inasmuch these attendees expressed their criticisms in a positive, concerned fashion, and were by all indications friendly to the Agency, I wanted to make you aware of their perceptions. (C)

3. Information: Their criticisms characterized CIA employees as tending to be very young, uninformed, inexperienced, impressed with themselves, and generally unhelpful; in essence, the employee was the wrong person for the job. The words "not mature" and "amateur" were recurring. Three examples:

- A staff assistant (who himself appeared to be all of about 25 years old) to Congressman Smith said that he was surprised at the youth of so many Agency employees. He went on to say that many were "big-deal acting," immature, and often appeared not to understand the nuances of issues, citing weapons capabilities in Afghanistan as an example. He concluded by saying that he felt this was a widely-held

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view among his Congressional staff circles and that it was "turning off a lot of people on the hill."

- A gentleman employed by a Congressional foundation who said he had recently been  (he implied that the trip was related to the provision of US assistance) described the behavior of Agency employees he observed there as amateurish and "creating an unfortunate impression." He attributed the problem to apparent inexperience.
- The chairman of the board of Martin Marietta Corporation, having overheard one of the above comments to me, said, "I have really been disappointed that the Agency doesn't seem to be getting this turned around. These kids you are hiring may be very smart. Unfortunately, they just don't know anything." (S)

4. I cannot speak to the backgrounds or motives of the individuals I've mentioned except to say that no malice was evident. Their perception was disturbing to me and seemed worthy of being brought to your attention.  
(U)



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